C. Remarks

The claims are 1-12, 14, 15 and 17-23, with claims 1, 17, 18, 20, 22 and 23 being independent. Claims 13 and 16 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1-12, 14, 15, 17-21 and 23 have been amended. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to include changing and forming steps regarding the application of a secondary color and each of claims 17, 18 and 23 have been amended to specify that the bit converting step makes the number of bits of the binary print data equal to the number of bits of the multi-value print data when the data are binary. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims.

Claims 1-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Matsumoto (U.S. Patent No. 6,307,638). Applicants respectfully traverse that rejection.

Claims 1 and 20 include the feature of a changing step or a changing means, respectively, for changing an order of application of the different color inks to be applied for formation of a secondary color in a pixel area of a secondary color; the secondary color is formed on the basis of the multi-value print data provided by a multi-value conversion step. This feature, which is effective to correctly reproduce coloring, is not disclosed or suggested by Matsumoto.
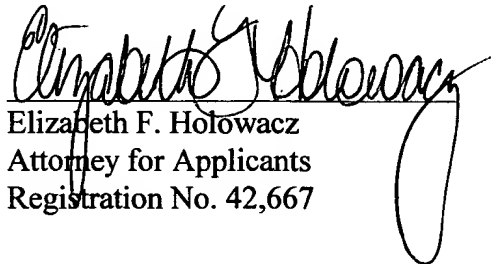
Claims 17, 18, 22 and 23 include a feature wherein a bit converting means makes the number of bits of the binary print data equal to the number of bits of the multi-value print data when the supplied print data are binary. This feature, which is effective to enhance printing speed for text data and the like, is not disclosed or suggested by Matsumoto.

In sum, Matsumoto fails to disclose or suggest certain key features of the presently claimed invention. In particular, there is no disclosure or suggestion of changing an order of application of the different color inks to be applied for formation of a secondary color in a pixel area of a secondary color or making the number of bits of the binary print data equal to the number of bits of the multi-value print data when the supplied print data are binary. Accordingly, Matsumoto does not anticipate the present invention, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the §102 rejection.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, favorable reconsideration and passage to issue of the present case is respectfully requested. If, upon consideration of this paper, the Examiner believes there are any outstanding issues, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney in an effort to expeditiously resolve such issues.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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